What is claimed:

1. A roller element which is arranged to be rotatably mounted in a media-advancing device with its axis extending transversely of the direction of media advance such that the roller element engages a media at one or more locations along the direction of said axis, characterised in that, as the media advances, said one or more locations of engagement move(s) continuously in the direction of said axis throughout at least a substantial part of each rotation of the roller element.

2. A roller element according to claim 1 wherein said one or more locations of engagement move(s) continuously in the direction of said axis throughout at least substantially the whole of each rotation of the roller element.

3. A roller element according to claim 2 wherein said one or more locations of engagement of the roller element move(s) continuously in the direction of said axis throughout successive rotations.

4. A roller element according to claim 2 or 3, having a surface with at least one raised portion in the form of a continuous band around the circumference of the roller element and inclined relative to the direction of media advance.

5. A roller element according to claim 4, wherein the or each band has a substantially uniform dimension in the direction of said axis.

6. A roller element according to claim 5 wherein the edges of the or each band possess no discontinuities.

7. A roller element according to claim 6, wherein a band is provided at each end of a roller element, the bands being substantially identical.

8. A roller element according to claim 7, wherein the corresponding parts of the bands are aligned along said axis.

9. A roller element according to claim 7 wherein the surface of the roller element has non-raised regions adjacent the or each raised region, the area of the or each raised region lying within the range 30 to 90% of the total area of the raised region and its respective adjacent non-raised regions.

10. A roller element according to claim 2, with a surface which has at least one raised portion in the form of a helix around the roller element.

11. A roller element according to claim 10 which has a helix at each end, the helices having opposed hands.

12. A roller element which is arranged to be mounted in a media-advancing device with its axis extending transversely of the direction of media advance such that the roller element engages a media along the direction of said axis, characterised in that the roller element comprises one or more rows of balls mounted for rotation in a holder.

13. A roller element according to claim 12 comprising two parallel rows of balls.

14. A roller element according to claim 12 or 13, wherein the balls are mounted in the holder with a degree of play along the length of the rows.

15. A roller element which is arranged to be mounted in a media-advancing device with its axis extending transversely of the direction of media advance such that different parts of the surface of the roller element successively engage with and then disengage from the media characterised in that a line joining the points on the surface of the roller element which disengage from the media at successive moments in time, is inclined relative to the direction of media advance.

16. A hardcopy apparatus comprising a roller element according to claim 1 relatively biased against a drive roller member with the media being arranged to advance therebetween.